



## Herbal Energetics and Formula Creation

### Transcript – Lesson 6

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Hi everybody. Welcome back to the Intro to Herbal Energetics and Formula Creation course. So, we're going to continue on the tense/lax energetic axis in this module as well as learning about sour and astringent plants and how to make and use herbal vinegars. So as always, you guys probably have this memorized by now, but I just want to point out that learning how to use herbs and create herbal formulations are really just meant to be supplementary to addressing the underlying root causes of any health issue. So, make sure and realize that herbs can be but shouldn't be used solely as Band-Aids. They're really meant to be part of a bigger puzzle that incorporates lifestyle, nutrition, spirituality and joy, good habits that support health and wellness, but if you're using them in that way, they can be a very, very powerful supplement to any healing protocol.

So, in this module, first, we're going to cover what the lax energetic health condition really means, and then what herbs can be used for lax health issues. Then we'll cover the sour and astringent flavor profiles as well as how to make and use herbal vinegars. Let's get going. So just as a reminder, last time we were here, the last module was talking about tension, so tense health energetic states. So now we're along that same axis and we're talking about sort of the opposite of that. Even though we really don't want to think about the body in dualities, but we're talking about lax energetic states. And so, when we think about tension where things were spasming or tightened, laxity is really the lack of tone or structural weakness. So, this can be called the atony where muscles or organs really just don't have the strength, stability or structure to function.

This could be described as flaccid and prolapse, this can result in sponginess and leakiness. So, when tissues lose tone or lose structural function, they can lose or leak the fluids that are in them. The visual of this is like a really runny nose or conjunctivitis where your eyes are just leaking, leaking, leaking fluids. But another way this can show up is through swelling. So, if you have astringent gums, your gums can get kind of spongy and swollen. Another analogy or another example of this is the prostate. So, atony or lax conditions can really present themselves these two sort of different ways. So leaky fluids from lack of tone or swollen spongy prolapseness and I love the analogy Jim McDonald uses, cause I think we've all seen this happen where we blow up a balloon and the balloon gets too big or too old, but then you let the air out and the balloon's just kind of flaccid and even if you were to blow it up again, it's just kind of like floppy, right?

And if you can imagine that as like a prostate or spongy leaky gums, it's just such a good visual to demonstrate what we're talking about when we're talking about lax conditions. Now, what laxity can result in from continuous loss of fluid is lack of or depletion of minerals. It inhibits elasticity, which can just completely stop the function of that organ or that tissue. By opening up the cells through increasing leakiness that can invite bacterial infections, that increases the risk of further damage. Another thing that's really interesting here, and you kind of want to pay attention to this when you're assessing the energetics of the health issue, is after tissues lose fluid long enough, they can dry out from loss of fluid and then they become hard. And so, the temptation will be to call that dry, but if you just put moisture on dry tissues that are actually dry from leakiness, that's just going to sort of be a Band-Aid when the underlying cause of that dryness was the lax condition. And so, you really want to address the laxity and by addressing the laxity, the dryness in and of itself will go away.

So, if laxity is leakiness or swollenness from a lack of structure, then we need to astringe those secretions, right? We need to stop secretions; we need to tighten and tone those leaky prolapsed tissues. And in doing that, it's going to dry the tissues locally that you're astringing cause they're going to stop the leakiness, but to your entire system, when you tighten and tone those tissues, it's going to hold moisture into this system. Also, in doing that, you're going to change the terrain and what that means is you change the structure of that cell so that infections are less likely to happen. Damage is less likely to happen. And so, the visceral or foundational action we're talking about here is really just astringent, and remember astringent wasn't really a flavor. It's a feeling and astringency is found over all of the different flavor profiles, but always you're looking for that astringing nature to bind up the proteins of this cells, tighten them back up, restore that structure, change that terrain, and therefore stop those excess secretions, stop that prolapse.

Two other herbal actions that we're going to see when we get to the primary actions of formula building for lax conditions are the tonics and the trophorestoratives. So, tonic has sort of a weird issue in herbalism where sometimes when people say tonic they mean strictly just astringing, so like toning and tightening a cell. When I talk about that, I'm going to say astringe or I'm going to say tighten and tone, as opposed to tonic versus another definition for tonic, is just restoring the strength or the structure or the vigor or the vital force to the body, either through the whole system or the organ or the tissue or the cell. And so, in that definition, tonics are also indicated for lax conditions because laxity causes a decrease in strength or a decrease in vitality to the cell or the tissue or the organ. So, tonics are indicated here. It's sort of a subset or a parallel herbal action to tonics are trophorestoratives and trophorestoratives restore trophic structure. So, they restore structure and function to the body at the different cellular levels and so astringents, tonics, and trophorestoratives are really going to be the main herbal actions we're looking for here.

So, I know I just told you that the astringent sensation is found over all of the different flavor profiles and that's true, but if you look at different herbal fields of study, so Chinese medicine, Ayurveda, Western herbalism, et cetera, sometimes the astringent profile is lumped in with this sour flavor profile. And sometimes it's separate and it gets its own tastes. So, some of them just say there's five flavors, right? The sour, the bitter, the aromatic, et cetera. Some of them say there's more flavors and they separate out astringent from sour. The reason why astringent gets lumped in with sour is because the same constituents, and we're going to look at this when we look at the sour flavor profile plants later, the same constituents that contribute to the sour flavor also contribute to the astringent sensation. However, sour and astringent are quite different and you can think of this as the difference between, I'm trying to think of something people commonly do, I'm like sucking on a sumac berry which is really sour versus biting a sumac leaf which is very astringent. Well, I don't know how many of you have done that, right?

Another example I'm thinking of is eating a Rosehip, which is sour versus chewing on a Rose petal, which is very astringent and we'll look at some more examples of these a little bit later, but the constituent that's giving a plant that astringent property are called tannins and tannins can run from very mild to like eating a plantain leaf, which you may not really even think about being astringent, they're just very slightly astringent, to chewing on oak bark or oak leaf, which is like alarmingly astringent. So astringent that it can even make you nauseous, right? And there's things all in the middle like sage is astringent, turmeric is astringent, yarrow leaves as opposed to the yarrow flower, the flower's mildly astringent. So, the rose family, the leaves in the rose family are almost all astringent. In fact, they have an acronym called YARFA, yet another rose family astringent, so like raspberry leaves, strawberry leaves, blackberry leaves, even the roots of those plants. Blackberry root is extremely astringent, but all of these are going to be tightening and toning to the tissues because of their astringent quality.

And just like in the last module where instead of talking about which herbal taste to use for which health issues for lax conditions, really, we're just going to go organ system by organ system because that astringent flavor is just found all over the different flavor profiles. So, I'll go over the primary herbal actions you're looking for, for specific lax conditions in these organ systems and give a few herbal examples. So, remember the foundational action we're looking here for lax health issues, it's always going to be astringent, right. We're tightening toning and astringing those leaky, prolapsed,

swollen, spongy tissues. So, for the digestive, urinary and/or respiratory issues, you're going to find primary herbal actions like diuretics, tonics, trophorestoratives, decongestants. Let's go over a few of these. So, some lax conditions in the digestive system could be ulcerations, whether they're in the esophagus, the stomach, the duodenum.

You can ... and those are going to be more like this swollen, spongy tissues that need to be tightened and toned. You can have lax sphincters that are letting fluids flow from one area of the digestive system to the next when they're not supposed to. So, a lax esophageal sphincter can be the cause of heartburn and an astringent would be indicated to tighten and tone that sphincter. Now, this is an area where you also want to combine that with the cause, right? So, this could be lack of hydrochloric acid. This could be lack of nutrients to make hydrochloric acid. So, astringent herbs aren't going to be the only thing you do for these issues, right? But we sort of already covered that. You could have leaky gut where the lining of your small intestines are so stretched out that they're letting things leak from your small intestines into your blood and so those small intestinal cells need to be tightened and toned with an astringent.

You could have leaky large intestinal cells resulting in diarrhea, hemorrhoids, or more like swollen prolapsed tissues in the digestive system. So, some great herbs for this internally or externally could be plantain, sage, even yarrow. One thing to note about taking tannins and astringents internally in the digestive system is you almost always want to combine them with demulcents so you don't dry out the lining of the intestines. That can cause nausea. It can cause sort of a swinging in the other direction. Some digestive tonics and trophorestoratives, we would bring back in the bitters. So, bitters are considered digestive tonic or a digestive trophorestorative. So, those would be indicated here if you have sort of a structurally weak or lax digestive system and then if the area is in the liver and the liver needs rebuilding to structure, milk thistle is another trophorestorative there.

So, when you use the word trophorestorative in a formula, you always want to put trophorestorative to what, right? Digestive trophorestorative, liver trophorestorative, lung trophorestorative cause trophorestorative is too broad. It doesn't mean anything unless you indicate which organ your trophorestoring. Same thing for tonic. So, you would want to say digested tonic, urinary tonic. Okay, so in the urinary system, some lax issues could be just frequent urination, incontinence. It could be a urinary tract infection in which you want to combine this probably with diuretic aromatics that are also antimicrobial, but you want to astringe the leaky tissues and change the terrain of the urinary tract so that those bacteria can't plug into and get stuck in those leaky, spongy, lax cells. Some good examples here would be bearberry, sumac, even goldenrod, sometimes yarrow. Hematuria or pyuria-hematuria is blood in the urine.

Pyuria is pus or white blood cells in the urine. Hematuria, let me say something about this. If you see actual blood like coming out, like in the toilet, in your urine, you need to go to the doctor. But if you're doing like a urine test and it says there's some indications of blood cells, yarrow is a good styptic that can also ... that's also excreted. It's a diuretic through the urinary system. If you've got a urinary tract infection with pyuria, goldenrod, plantain, agrimony; these are all great examples to restore the entire system. Like if it's at the level of the kidney or the bladder, nettle seed is a kidney tonic. Mullen root is a bladder tonic and so, depending on where the urinary issue is showing up, different tonics and trophorestoratives and diuretics would be indicated. Then lax conditions in the upper respiratory system could just be like constant runny nose, right? So, leaky eyes, leaky runny nose from allergies and this is where you're going to want to dry that up with astringent. Upper respiratory affecting herbs; good examples are ragweed and goldenrod is super astringent and amazing for allergies.

Alright, so if you have some laxity going on in the reproductive system, like a prolapsed prostate or prolapsed uterus or a lack of tone in the uterus or the prostate, saw palmetto would be indicated, nettle root combined with another astringent. You've also got tonics in this area. So, some uterine tonics are raspberry leaf, lady's mantle, partridge berry; these are all astringent but also tend to be toning to the reproductive system and so you could use them there. If you've got some laxity in the lymph, in the lymphatic system where a lymphagogue would be the primary action you're looking for, this can be like swollen spon ... I guess you're not going to know if your glands are spongy, but swollen glands, you can feel that. So, an astringent lymphatic would be red root.

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You can have lots of leaky issues in the vascular system, so these could be hemorrhoids, this could be frequent bruising, these could be varicose veins, even just like frequent external bleeding. So, this is where you're going to use your styptics, which stop bleeding that are also astringent, so witch hazel externally, oak bark internally or externally, but again, that's super astringent so be careful with that. Yarrow is a classic vascular styptic that you can use internally or externally, but you can also do cardiovascular tonics to restore structure and function to the whole system to strengthen the system while you're also astringent in the local tissues. So, hawthorne, arjuna, even stone root would be tonics, cardiovascular tonics to use here. The integumentary system, this is more of like ulcerations, so mouth ulcers, open wounds on the skin, you want to tighten and tone and astringe those so you could use the YARFA's.

So, rose family, plantain, sage; sage mouthwash is great for mouth ulcers and if it's infected, combine it with salt and just like swish that around your mouth. You just want to astringe those tissues and that changes the terrain so much that those infections go away cause the bacteria just can't stay there anymore. Then the mucosa, either internally or externally, mucosal astringents are Yerba mansa, which is more of a systemic mucosal astringent. It's also warming versus goldenseal, which has to come in contact with the mucosa that it's restoring or that it's astringing and restoring structure to. It's also very bitter, so it's more of a cooling astringent. So, remember we're trying to layer these axes, so we're on the tense/lax axis, but don't forget about the hot/cold axis and be thinking about the combinations of herbal actions you need here.

So, what about the nervous system? Does the nervous system get lax and leaky? Well, you do have nervous system tonics and trophorestoratives and milky oats comes to mind here. So, Jim McDonald pondered the idea that a nervous system indication for astringing or toning or trophorestoring could be like a leaky personality where maybe you're always sort of crying about everything or you leak information that you're not supposed to. So, just sort of thinking about how these herbal actions can lend themselves not just to physical things that we see defined more in Western medicine, but where on the constitutional or personality scale can we see an indication for these herbal actions or these herbal energetics. So, I just wanted to throw that in there because I thought it was interesting to think about.

And so, now viewing a lax energetic state from the foundation of knowing, okay, if this is lax, we know we need to astringe. We know that's what we're looking for, that tightening and toning and astringing. Then once you know the primary herbal action you're looking for, based upon which organ system is being affected, if you know you want antimicrobial or you know, you want to anti-inflammatory, knowing that you want a diuretic, antimicrobial astringent, is going to be much more targeted than just selecting every diuretic that exists or every lymphagogue that exists or every tonic that exists, right? Knowing how to apply your formula at an energetic scale by having assessed this as a lax issue is going to make sure your formula is more effective.

Alright, so now that we've covered tons of different health conditions that would be assessed as lax energetically and different herbs, especially astringent herbs, but also a tonic and trophorestorative herbs that would be indicated for addressing those lax conditions, now let's dive into the sour and astringent flavor profiles to understand really what astringency ... which plants have astringency and why and then we'll talk about how to make and use herbal vinegars.

So, recall as we've been going through the plant flavor profiles and really looking at the aromatic flavor profile and the sweet and the bitter flavor profiles, we've been talking about plant secondary metabolites. So, the secondary metabolites in plants are their chemical defenses, how they improve their reproductive success and we have co-evolved with plants for so long that our bodies need these secondary metabolites. So, so far, I haven't shown you this big crazy table because the flavor profiles we've been talking about are in just one box. So, for example, last time we talked about the alkaloids and you can see on here the different phytochemicals. It's another name for plant secondary metabolites, to simplify that a little bit. Alkaloids get their own little box, right? And polysaccharides would get their own little box. They're not even on here, but when we get into this sour and astringent flavor profile, it gets a little more complicated.

So here we're going to be under the phenolics, which if you look at the second box from the left and how it branches out into the Flavonoids and they branch out and the phenolic acids and they branch out. Then you can see next to the flavonoids, there's tannins. We've been mentioning those is as that's what imparts the astringency to herbs. So, we're all over the place here, right? And these phytochemicals, these phenol polyphenolic phytochemicals have really interesting health benefits, but they're not vitamins and minerals and carbs and liquids and protein, so they don't get a lot of ... they don't get talked about a lot in sort of Western nutrition that really only cares about these micro ... the macronutrients. But these micronutrient phytochemicals are super powerful. So, let's dive into them.

So, for the chemistry nerds out there, a polyphenol is really just a molecule that we're ... phenol phytochemicals contain polyphenols and a polyphenol is a chemical that contains two hydroxyls. That's an oxygen and a hydrogen-bonded together; two hydroxyls bonded to a benzene ring. And a benzene ring is really just six carbons bonded together in a like hexagon; in a stop sign kind of ring. That's what a polyphenol is chemically, but there are so many of them found in so many different plants and they have so many different amazing qualities, that they're getting a lot more scientific study now. So, if you just go type in any of the words at the bottom of the chart, you'll find tons of studies showing how they're anti-inflammatory and neurotropic and adaptogenic and anticancer, phytoestrogen, cardioprotective. They do all kinds of amazing things to the human body showing that our cells have sort of developed a need for these plant phytochemicals in our bodies and if you don't want to dive into the nerdy chemistry science of it, the easiest way to remember it is just eat a lot of different sour flavor profile plants. So, let's talk about how to know what that is and how to get them into your body.

So, one way to know is just by looking at the plant, right? So, one subset of polyphenols are the flavonoids and this is going to be that sour flavor profile. But to know that a plant has flavonoids is really just to look at the color. So, these are gonna be your yellows and your oranges, and your reds, and your blues and your purples. So if you look at the yellow of the dandelion flower or the red of the hawthorn berry or the red of the hibiscus calyx, the red of the Rosehips, the blue of the corn flower; all of these colors indicate that this plant is high in polyphenol flavonoids and they're going to have these amazing health qualities. So, just eating them, a diversity of them as much and as often as possible. We'll get these phytonutrients and phytochemicals into your body. So, eat your colorful flowers, eat your dark, colorful fruits and veggies to get these sour flavor constituents.

Okay, so some plant examples of these that are common in herbalism. One is Rhodiola. Rhodiola is an adaptogen. It's a stimulating adaptogen and its adaptogenic because of the polyphenols in it. So, we talked about adaptogens that had this sweet flavor profile polysaccharides. Well, these have polyphenols and polyphenols ... because of the polyphenols in Rhodiola, it's been studied and shown to have reduced inflammation, reduced risk of disease, it can improve immune system, it can improve recovery from excess training and overworking. This is a quote from my Herbs for Energy book where I talk about how Rhodiola is indicated to overcome fatigue, even chronic fatigue, and even mental health issues as well. So, keep in mind, we want to consider energetics when we choosing these plants and Rhodiola is stimulating and cooling and drying. So, if you're like, "Oh my gosh, this herbs sounds perfect" but it doesn't match you energetically and there's not another adaptogen that matches you perfectly, you can balance that, right, with something that's more warming and moistening to balance the cooling and drying of the Rhodiola.

Schisandra is another adaptogen high and phytonutrients you can tell from its bright red color, right? Schisandra's interesting cause it's called the five-flavor herb. So, it contains all five of the flavor profiles so, it's going to be sour, astringent, but it's also got some bitter and aromatic. So, see if after you go through this training you can taste the Schisandra berry and pick up on all five of the flavors to show up. But it's definitely an adaptogen for overcoming fatigue, but it's also indicated for strengthening the lungs, astringing leaky digestion, balancing the nervous system via decreasing sympathetic dominance and increasing parasympathetic dominance. It's an immune system enhancer. It's a tonic to the liver and it, you can imagine by it being or including all five flavor profiles, it's going to affect all of these different organ systems, right?

Oh, here's my favorite polyphenol, hibiscus. So, these are all pictures from my garden. So, I live in Texas, so you can definitely grow this in the southern climates. You can grow it in the northern climates too. This is a fall bloomer. So, you want to start it indoors by seed and then transplant it after any risk of freezing happens because this is a tropical plant, but you can absolutely grow it, especially if you start it from seed indoors. The red in the hibiscus indicates its high polyphenol content. It's hypotensive, it's anti-inflammatory, it's high in other phytonutrients like vitamin C and it's got tons of studies on it showing that it's a cardio tonic. And I'm going to include some links in your resources, of course, for a great monograph on hibiscus and how to grow it and how to use it, but really, it's just so delicious and beautiful that you throw it in water; it makes every herbal tea look beautiful and red. I just use it constantly and it's super fun to grow.

So, something I just couldn't leave out here, I had to include this, is usually when someone talks about polyphenols and flavonoids, they're going to say that they're antioxidant. And I did not include that in my list of herbal magic from the polyphenols because anti-oxidant is kind of a misnomer. And we've been talking about the ORAC value of plants and how anti-oxidant they are and how antioxidants stop cancer and are anti-inflammatory and are cardioprotective. And we've really then practicing or operating under the notion that the reason why herbs and spices and vegetables and plants and berries are so powerful is because they're so high in antioxidants, but that's really been completely thrown out by science. Scientists disproved the antioxidant concept and medicine, even in the health field like holistic and conventional medicine, really just hasn't caught up to the terminology yet. And in fact, the way that plants are so beneficial to us from these secondary metabolites are because they're toxins. So, let's just dive into that a little bit.

So, first of all, and I'm gonna provide these links in your resources, there are hundreds of studies showing that when we take antioxidants as supplements, and so the antioxidants that tend to be in supplements or vitamins A, C and E, they spell ACE, beta carotene is a form of vitamin A and selenium, they've been studying these and show that, first of all, not only are there no benefits from taking antioxidant supplements, but there's also potential harm. In fact, there are studies and studies and studies that show an increase in cardiovascular damage, increasing cancer risk, a decrease from the benefits of exercise, and so much more even lifespan in a study on houseflies from taking antioxidant supplements. So why does this matter? Well, when we first came up with the idea that it was antioxidants in plants that were giving us benefits, people were like, "Well, I'm not eating enough antioxidant, so I'll just take anti-oxidant supplements to make up for my poor diet." And that's really pretty much what we do now, but the problem is plants aren't benefiting us by being antioxidants. So, when we take anti-oxidant supplements, we're harming our bodies. So, let me just explain why on the next slide and explain what we should do instead.

So, there's this concept or there's this process really in the body called hormesis and hormesis is really the paradigm that if it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger sort of concept, but really what hormesis is when the body is exposed to small doses of stressors, that tells our body that it needs to get stronger and more resilient. And so, it does; your cells get stronger, they get more adaptive, they get more resilient, and they get more powerful against cancer and powerful against damage. And so, when we take antioxidants as supplements, it tells our body, "Hey, you are not stressed so you don't have to be strong," and so the body's internal resilience system, and if you want to look up the science of this, it's called the ARE, but the internal system that creates resilience decreases when we take antioxidants as supplements cause our body says, "Oh, we're cool. We don't need to be strong."

So how then are plants and herbs so powerful? So, the disconnect is, "Oh, if we take antioxidants and supplements, they don't work, but if we eat antioxidants as fruits and veggies and spices, they do work." The problem is that's not how the fruits and veggies are actually working. They're not antioxidants, they're hormetic pro-oxidant toxins that are little stressors to our body and so when we eat these pro-oxidant toxins from fruits and veggies and herbs and spices because remember these are secondary metabolites in plants. Plants have these to deter pests, to deter viruses, to deter bacteria, but for us, they tell ourselves, "Oh, you're getting exposed to these toxins and we need to get better and stronger and more resilient." So instead of taking antioxidant supplements, we need to be eating our phytonutrient, pro-oxidant toxic herbs. That's so crazy, right?

But that's how they work, so we need to eat all of the different colors of the rainbow as often as possible. Use herbs as much as possible, so we're getting exposed to all of the different pro-oxidant hormetic stressors from our plants so our bodies get more and more and more and more resilient. And that's how phytonutrient works and again, I know that's a huge paradigm shift and I'm going to include some pretty huge scientific studies in your resources. Huge meaning overturning a paradigm huge in your resources. For those of you who want to, come check it out.

Alright, so another subset of the polyphenols are the tannins and even tannins have their own subsets as far as how complex they are and you can kind of look at these, right? They have different structures. Some of them have these little sugar rings. Some of them have tons of these benzene rings. Some have more, some have less, but they're all tannins in their complexity. Really just depends on how they digest and how they're handled in the body. They are different and if you want to know their differences, again, you can get Lisa Ganora's herbal constituents book that I've referenced in your resources before. So fascinating to dig into it, but the important thing to know is that tannins are astringent, so they tighten and tone those lax tissues. And we've talked about tons of examples of these already. This is a picture of witch hazel.

But one thing I want to mention here, and I know I mentioned it in module one, is remember that tannins bind proteins and that's how they tighten and tone your actual cells. Well, if you take tannins with fat molecules, fat molecules will bind up to those tannins. So like dairy and cream, et cetera, will bind tannins and render them useless or decrease their astringency, which is why traditionally we drank tea and coffee with cream, right? So, if you're taking your tannins medicinally and you want to be using them as an astringent, you want to not mix them with other proteins or fats so that they can astringe the tissues you want to astringe them with. But if you just happen to be drinking a whole bunch of tea or a whole bunch of coffee and you don't want to overly astringe the tissues they're coming in contact with, you can mix them with that dairy or cream and then that'll decrease the potency of the tannin polyphenols.

And I'm going to go ahead and throw in your homework for the sour and astringent plants here before we talk about vinegars and I'll tell you your homework for vinegars there. So, you've got two different activities for exploring the sour and astringent herbal plants and flavor profiles. One, I want you to explore the sour flavor by creating a homemade, vitamin C-rich herbal product because like we learned, we don't really want to be taking our antioxidants as supplements. We want to be taking them as whole foods and herbs happen to be a great way to get your vitamin C in and if you use Rosehips, which grow locally, that is decreasing our impact of importing other vitamin C-rich herbs like amla, or acerola or camu camu which have sustainability issues attached to them. And Rose hips are native and they're easy to harvest. They grow everywhere, right? So just make sure they're not sprayed.

So, in your resources and in your homework, I have a link to making vitamin C pastilles with powdered versions of these herbs where you take the powder, you kind of roll it in a tiny bit of honey and make these little vitamin C balls and you can just take them. But ways you can simplify this is you can also just take the vitamin C-rich herbs as powder and put them in a mason jar and fill it with half powder and half honey and stir it up. So instead of making the pastilles, which take a little bit of time, it gets a little messy with your hands, which can be fun, right? You can simplify it by just stirring the herbs and honey together and then you have this vitamin C herbed honey, and you can take it by the spoonful or stirred into water just right there, right? Take it every day. You can also skip all of this and just take a spoonful of the actual powdered herbs stirred into water and drink it down, sort of like an herb guzzle right or a vitamin C powder stir. So, choose one of these options and start adding these phytonutrient flavonoids in food form to your daily herb intake.

And then I think it would be really useful to explore three different ways of getting more familiar with the astringent flavor profile and the astringent sensation. So, one is to do a taste test between a mild, a mid-grade versus an extreme astringent and I have some examples here. Some hopefully you can find locally or you can just, you know, order these herbs and kind of taste them. But you can turn these into a tea or just bite the plant itself, but get familiar with the different ranges of astringency so you can know that if you need an astringent herb for a lax health issue, don't just grab all of them and don't just sort of kitchen sink, you know willy-nilly choose one. They do have different strengths and so

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they're going to be indicated differently for different issues. Another thing I would like you to explore is the astringent quality of tannins extracted by water in a tea versus alcohol in a tincture and you don't have to make a ton of it, right? You can do a teeny, teeny tiny amount of tincture and a teeny tea, but just sort of take, do the same plant but taste the different levels of astringency in water versus alcohol. And then also do a tannin with and without cream. So, this can be an herbal tea with and without cream. This can be your coffee with and without cream and see if you can physiologically feel the difference in the astringency and how that protein slash fat sort of binds up the tannins and see if you can taste or sense those differences.

And in your resources, I'm going to include some optional astringent recipes for different health issues, different lax health issues. So, I'm going to throw in a recipe for the sage mouthwash that I mentioned for ulcers in the mouth, a face toner to tighten and tone and astringe your epithelial tissues in your face, a yarrow, sitz bath for hemorrhoids or for postpartum issues, and then a tooth polish that can be good for just keeping the gums nice and tight and toned and astringed. You don't have to do any of these, but I just couldn't leave them out, right? So, I'm gonna put them in your resources for you to peruse if you would like.

Okay, so we have talked about lax health issues and herbs for those health issues which included astringent flavor. So, we then explored the sour and astringent flavor profiles, the similarities and differences between them. So now let's talk about how to make and use herbal vinegars, which happened to be sour.

So, I chose herbal vinegars for this module because we were talking about the sour and astringent plants. But the funny thing about herbal vinegar extractions is they're not great for extracting tannins and flavonoids. So, they're not really going to be the herbal action you choose if you're looking to use astringent plants, right? So, I didn't choose this because it was great for lax issues. I chose it because it's another sour flavor sort of Menstrum. However, vinegars are great at extracting minerals, aromatics, and sort of kind of the alkaloids. So, they're a weak extractor of alkaloids, but a strong extractor of minerals and the aromatic oils. They also don't extract the polysaccharides like the demulcents in the adaptogen polysaccharides. They don't extract the saponins either. So, the pros of using vinegar extractions for herbs is it makes things shelf-stable.

So, you can store vinegars on the shelf. You can make culinary vinegars to ... so, if you're gonna use vinegar anyway in cooking, so like if you're using vinegar as a marinade or if you're using vinegar as a salad dressing, it might as well be an herbed vinegar, right? Just another way to sneak the mineral-rich and aromatic herbs into your diet. If you're using vinegars already or you can use them to be medicinal. You can make a lot of medicinal vinegars for a lot of health issues where aromatic oils are indicated. Cons is that sure these vinegars extract minerals, but you can only take vinegars in pretty low doses cause they're really sour and acidic and so they shouldn't be the only way you're getting your mineral-rich herbs into your body, but they're just an additional way to get your mineral-rich and aromatic herbs into your body. Now I did say that they can extract alkaloids and they sort of kind of can, but another pro to this is people who can't or don't want to use alcohol tinctures as a remedy can get a weaker, but at least a sort of analogous medicine by using vinegar as an alkaloid extractor. So, this is where you'll see vinegar herbal bitters instead of the alcoholic extracted herbal bitters, et cetera.

Another pro to making herbal vinegars is it is so easy. You take the plant, cover it in vinegar and let it sit. You can strain it or you cannot strain it. That's up to you. You just want to make sure the plant is totally covered in vinegar because whatever part of the plant is sticking out, that can go bad. So, you want to make sure it's totally covered. You also want to make sure you don't use a metal lid for your herbal vinegars because it will corrode. So, you need to use a plastic lid or put paraffin wax in between a metal lid and the jar. But man, it is so easy to make herbal vinegars. You just soak the plant in the vinegar. So, for your homework, I'm going to include a ton of different herbal vinegar recipes, including how to make homemade vinegar, a culinary vinegar that you can use as a marinade or as a salad dressing.



I'll include several medicinal vinegar recipes, so fire cider, four thieves, vinegar bitters. I'll include oxymels, which is where you mix the vinegar with honey to make it a little more yummy and palatable. You can use oxymels for tons of different stuff. Usually, they're going to be respiratory and shrubs, which is a drink where you take the vinegar, mix it with honey, and then sort of dilute it in water or alcohol if you choose, and then drink it. So, lots of fun, different ways to make herbal vinegars and I just want you to choose one of them. I'm also going to include a handout that teaches you how to make fermented food because fermented foods is where you let the native bacteria, natural bacteria, turn your veggies into vinegared, soured, fermented veggies; amazing probiotics with huge health benefits. So that can be your vinegar that you choose and you just add herbs to your ferment and you have herbed, fermented food. So, for your homework, just choose one of these, but I really recommend doing all of them.

Okay, so we have deeply covered lax health issues, how to use astringent, tonic and trophorestorative herbs for those lax health issues. We dove into the sour and astringent flavor profiles for herbs and then we learned how to make and use herbal vinegars. So have fun doing your sour and astringent and vinegar homeworks and keep in mind that the energetic formula building practice is going to come from the quiz. Okay, so that covers our exploration of the tense and lax energetic axis. We just have one more axis to cover and then you guys get to start making formulas. So, I'll see you guys over at the next module.